

Spotlight on Action

Created by Inaburra Senior Library, 2017

Action books are suspenseful, edge of your seat stories full of action and adventure.

History of the Action genre

Action stories have been around since ancient times, with tales such as the Odyssey that are full of action and adventure.

From the Victorian era onwards adventure stories written for boys became popular.

Action plots often use and revolve around technology. Action stories from last century feature the new technology from at that time.

Previously action was a male dominated genre, with mainly male authors and mainly male protagonists, but in recent years there are more female action authors and more women as action heroes.

Famous Action authors

Ally Carter
Lauren Child
Tom Clancy
Clive Cussler
Ian Fleming
Tom Clancy
Jack Heath
Charlie Higson
Jack Higgins
Anthony Horowitz
Gabrielle Lord
Robert Muchamore
James Patterson
Matthew Riley
Chris Ryan

Common themes

The focus is on action rather than themes or character development.

There is a hero with a goal and they face almost impossible odds.

There's something bigger at stake and the hero must work to prevent it.

Villains are often evil.

Heroes are flawed and their flaws often play a key role in the plot.

Something the conflict can be the hero against nature.

There is often a journey involved.

There is often a betrayal of one of the characters.

The story is full of intrigue, excitement, danger and risk, with a building sense of urgency followed by a thrilling climax.

Action stories often cross over with other genres such a romance, crime, thriller, sci-fi, dystopian and war.